REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion and in view of the present amendment, is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-3 were previously cancelled. Claim 1 is amended. Claims 1 and 4-11 are pending in the application.

I. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, at page 2, numbered paragraph 3, claims 6, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claim 1, from which claims 6, 8 and 9 depend, was amended in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, withdrawal of the § 112, 1st paragraph rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, at page 4, numbered paragraph 7, claims 1, 4, 5 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,571,169 to Shima et al. in view of either Japanese Patent No. 7-195473 or U.S. Patent No. 3,674,400 to Sauerbruch et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed because the combination of Shima and either JP '473 or Sauerbruch does not suggest:

> guide faces formed at either one of the rear platen and the base; and
>
> adjusting mechanisms fixed to the other of the rear platen and the base in such a manner as to freely abut against the guide faces;
>
> wherein each adjusting mechanism abuts against each guide face such that the adjusting mechanism may adjust the inclination of the rear platen with respect to the stationary platen in a horizontal direction relative to a vertical axis of the rear platen; and
>
> wherein each adjusting mechanism has at least one element that is adjustable in order to adjust the inclination of the rear platen in the horizontal direction relative to the vertical axis of the rear platen,

as recited in amended independent claim 1.

As a non-limiting example, the present invention of claim 1 is directed to a clamping mechanism including guide faces formed at either one of a rear platen and a base and adjusting mechanisms fixed to the other of the rear platen and the base so as to freely abut against the guide faces. Each adjusting mechanism abuts against each guide face such that the adjusting

mechanism may adjust the inclination of the rear platen with respect to the stationary platen in a horizontal direction relative to a vertical axis of the rear platen. Each adjusting mechanism has at least one element that is adjustable in order to adjust the inclination of the rear platen in the horizontal direction relative to the vertical axis of the rear platen.

The Examiner concedes that JP '473 and Sauerbruch do not discuss or suggest adjustment mechanisms formed at either one of a rear platen and a base, but argues that Shima is directed to adjustment mechanisms at either the moving platen or the rear platen for adjustable cooperation with a slide base.

Shima discusses wedge-type slide metals. The Examiner noted that position adjustment of the rear platen in Shima occurs about a horizontal axis, and based on the discussion in the Office Action as to claims 10 and 11, stated that the prior art of record does not teach or suggest that the adjusting mechanisms for a rear platen or base are adjustable such that the rear platen is inclined in a horizontal direction relative to a vertical axis of the rear platen. As such, independent claim 1 was amended to incorporate the features of each adjusting mechanism abutting against each guide face such that the adjusting mechanism may adjust the inclination of the rear platen with respect to the stationary platen in a horizontal direction relative to a vertical axis of the rear platen and that the adjusting mechanisms each have at least one element that is adjustable in order to adjust the inclination of the rear platen in the horizontal direction relative to the vertical axis of the rear platen.

Neither JP '473 nor Sauerbruch suggest that adjusting mechanisms fixed to one of rear platen or the base are adjustable to adjust the inclination of the rear platen with respect to the stationary platen in a horizontal direction relative to a vertical axis of the rear platen. Further, as conceded by the Examiner, Shima does not discuss or suggest that the slide metals are adjustable such that the slide metals adjust the inclination of the rear platen with respect to the stationary platen in a horizontal direction relative to a vertical axis of the rear platen.

Therefore, as the combination of Shima and JP '473 or Sauerbruch does not suggest the adjustment of the inclination of the rear platen with respect to the stationary platen in a horizontal direction relative to a vertical axis of the rear platen, amended independent claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the references relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 5 and 7 depend directly from independent claim 1 and include all the features of claim 1, plus additional features that are not discussed or suggested by the references relied upon. For example, claim 7 recites that "each of the adjusting mechanisms comprises a fixing

member having a slope and a slide plate having a slope adapted to come into contact with the slope of the fixing member, said fixing member being attached to said base or said rear platen in a manner such that the slope of the fixing member is opposite one of the guide faces, and said slide plate being attached to the fixing member so that the face of the slide plate, opposite the slope thereof, comes into contact with said guide face, allowing the slide plate to penetrate between the guide face and the slope of the fixing member." Therefore, claims 4, 5 and 7 patentably distinguish over the references relied upon for at least the reasons noted above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants are appreciative of the indication that claims 10 and 11 are allowed.

Conclusion

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 1 has been amended. Claims 1 and 4-11 are pending and under consideration.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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By: _____

Kari P. Footland
Registration No. 55,187

1201 New York Avenue, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501